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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000179

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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/SA, NEA/RA, L/CA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/20/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: UNRESOLVED PASSPORT ISSUES COMPOUNDING AFGHAN
MISSION'S PROBLEMS IN OMAN

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. This is an action request for Department guidance. Please see paragraph 4.

¶2. (C) During a recent meeting with the Ambassador, the Charge d' Affairs of the Embassy of Afghanistan to Oman, Sayyid Mohammad Gailani, stated that he is facing considerable difficulty conducting his official business. (Note: There is no Afghan ambassador accredited to Oman. The Afghan mission in Muscat was upgraded from a consulate general to an embassy about a year and a half ago. End note.) He cited as one reason inadequate financial support from his own government to pay for official expenses. He told the Ambassador that he has been using personal funds to cover most of his communication expenses and a portion of his housing costs, and that he may have to vacate the official residence due to rising rents in the Muscat area. While the Omani government provides some financial assistance to the Afghan and other foreign missions, Gailani reported that it is insufficient to cover the balance of costs associated with running the mission.

¶3. (C) Gailani's primary complaint, however, was that officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) have been unresponsive to his requests to resolve the immigration status of some 400 Afghan nationals who entered Oman legally using Pakistani travel documents during the time when Gailani's government was not issuing its own passports. Gailani claimed that his mission is in the process of providing these nationals with new Afghan passports, and has supplied the MFA with both the old and new documents, requesting that the Ministry transfer valid Omani visas into the new Afghan passports and update the individuals' immigration status. The Charge claimed that the MFA is unnecessarily delaying action on his request - inconveniencing Afghan nationals who are unable to work or travel without their documents - and that he is having trouble gaining access to senior officials at the MFA to resolve the issue.

¶4. (C) Action Request: Post is willing to approach the Omani MFA to encourage quick resolution of the passport matter, and would appreciate Department guidance of potential use. In addition, Post's housing office will attempt to provide whatever assistance is possible to locate a new residence for the Charge.
GRAPPO